

USCA Natural and Working Lands Initiative

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Purpose: This survey will inform the direction of the USCA Natural and Working Lands Initiative (NWL Initiative) and scope external support of US Climate Alliance (USCA) member states to eventually develop state-specific Natural and Working Lands (NWL) climate strategies.

Please fill out the survey as it helps to scope USCA resource needs, even if your state may not currently be able to commit to developing a NWL climate strategy.

Each state should designate one respondent or coordinate one response to this survey.

Your input will also inform services and products that external partners are providing for USCA members:

A foundational policy inventory conducted by a coalition of non-governmental partners. The inventory will be coordinated with the Opportunity Assessments and Learning Lab described below to identify how state governments can manage natural and working lands to mitigate climate change.

State-specific carbon sequestration Opportunity Assessments led by the World Resources Institute (WRI) with additional partners. The Opportunity Assessments will provide quantitative assessments of land use and management practices and resultant carbon dynamics over different timeframes. These Opportunity Assessments will be used to help prepare states for the Learning Lab.

Learning Lab convened by American Forests (AF) and additional partners. The Lab will help each state to build off its Opportunity Assessment to develop more granular practice-based NWL strategies, customized for the unique NWL context in each state, and match these strategies to corresponding policy and finance options. This will help each state prepare for and assist in developing a framework for state-specific NWL climate strategies that are also coordinated through the USCA.

See the files attached in the email that distributed this survey link for more information on the Opportunity Assessments, Learning Lab, and other information related to this initiative.

1. Name:

2. Email:

3. Phone Number:

4. State:

5. Primary USCA contact for your state government:

USCA seeks input on the commitment(s) to action your state expects to be able to make publicly by September 2018, for potential announcement at or before the Global Climate Action Summit in San Francisco. The USCA and/or its member states may be in a position to anchor the Land Stewardship focus area for the Summit. Please indicate which of the three tiers below your state expects to reach by September. Each tier summary is followed by a brief description of the expected level of either passive or active engagement that will be expected of the state. This tiered system will also help us gauge the amount and type of technical assistance that will be needed. States will, of course, be able to “move up” over the course of the summer, and after the Global Climate Action Summit.

6. Please check the highest commitment tier that your state expects to reach by September 2018:

- ☐ **Tier 1: Inventory land-based carbon flux and identify best practices to increase resilient carbon sequestration. This is the baseline level of engagement in the NWL Initiative.** Participation will require passive (or active, if desired) participation in the general proceedings of the NWL Initiative and/or Inventory Initiative of the US Climate Alliance. States in this tier will have the option of participating in the carbon sequestration opportunity analysis being led by WRI.
- ☐ **Tier 2: Identify existing and potential new programs, policies, and/or funding sources to pursue resilient carbon sequestration.** Participation will require more active participation in the NWL Initiative, including responding to or working directly with external technical partners (e.g., WRI, TNC, American Forests, American Farmland Trust) through the Sequestration Opportunity Analysis, participation in the Summer 2018 Learning Lab, and follow-up technical assistance from these partners after the Lab. States in this tier will get a sequestration opportunity analysis completed and attend the Learning Lab (in person or via webinar). States will contribute to development of a shared Policy Framework. A state wishing to take a more passive role may do so, including adoption of the Policy Framework.
- ☐ **Tier 3: Establish a goal to increase resilient carbon sequestration and measure progress over time.** Participation will require states to adopt this goal, which would be determined independently for each state (e.g., based on opportunity analysis) or be part of a shared goal across multiple USCA states.

None of the above (please describe barriers or other reason)

7. Given the 2018 Statement of Purpose and NGO deliverables, do you anticipate any need for financial assistance for direct state needs in 2018? Please consider travel costs, as well as internal capacity or other needs:

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

If yes, please explain:

8. The USCA NWL Initiative seeks to gather more detailed input on states' desired participation in technical assistance opportunities. This will inform Initiative planning, budget needs, and the potential workflow for external partners. Please check all that apply:

- ☐ I would like to receive and/or help to develop a carbon sequestration Opportunity Assessment for my state (see below for more on the Opportunity Assessment).
- ☐ I would like to participate in the June/July 2018 Learning Lab to discuss state-specific carbon sequestration opportunities and advance state-specific consideration of policy and finance options (see below for more on the Learning Lab).

9. What types of programs does your state have that may be linked to NWL climate goals? Please check all that apply.

- ☐ State-level land use regulations that limit conversion of NWL
- ☐ State grant programs that fund conservation and restoration of NWL
- ☐ State tax incentives for private owners of NWL (e.g. current use taxation)
- ☐ State incentives or regulations to promote wood utilization
- ☐ State incentives or policy for bio-based energy
- ☐ Other (please specify and/or list)

10. What document-share sites are you able to use?

- ☐ Box.com
- ☐ Dropbox.com
- ☐ Sharepoint
- ☐ Google Drive
- ☐ Other (please specify or list)

11. We are seeking input on the best format and frequency for our Initiative calls. How would this time best serve your needs? Do you like the current format (30 minutes, twice monthly) or would a different format be a better use of time (e.g., 60 minutes, once a month)? As partner-assisted work gets underway, we can use this time to explore specific topics, like bioenergy or wetlands restoration, in greater detail. Please list any topics of interest to you and whether you or others in your network could lead such a discussion.

Opportunity Assessments

The Opportunity Assessments to be led by WRI with assistance from other partners, providing rigorous and fully transparent assessments of carbon sequestration potential across land uses. This will provide the starting point for each state to develop a forward-looking NWL strategy. States are invited to specify timeframes, levels of ambition, and land use focuses for the opportunity assessments, so that results speak to state interests and policy opportunities. WRI will also work with states to compile portfolios of NWL opportunities to facilitate consideration of state targets. The assessment will primarily rely on national data to ensure consistency across states. WRI is also available to discuss state-specific considerations and data.

12. Please check each of the natural and working lands “systems” that your state would anticipate wanting to include in your state's Opportunity Assessment. If your state would prefer to focus on just one “system,” please select only one.

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> All natural and working lands present in my state (do not select additional boxes below) | <input type="checkbox"/> Rangelands |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Forests | <input type="checkbox"/> Croplands/cultivated agricultural lands |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Coastal and tidal wetlands | <input type="checkbox"/> Urban carbon stocks (urban trees and green spaces, etc.) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Grasslands | <input type="checkbox"/> “Blue carbon” systems (sub-tidal systems, e.g., eelgrass beds) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify) | |

13. Please indicate what level of interest and engagement best characterizes your state's approach to developing Opportunity Assessments. WRI and partners do not expect these assessments to require significant staff time from states, apart from occasional conversations by phone.

- ☐ Initial partner to develop first Opportunity Assessments
- ☐ Interested partner once a process for the Opportunity Assessments is established
- ☐ Potential or passive partner interested in reviewing initial Opportunity Assessments
- ☐ Not currently interested

14. Is there other information you need or any questions that WRI can answer? Please list here and WRI staff will respond.

Learning Lab

The Learning Lab will provide an opportunity for each state to begin formulating a forward-looking NWL strategy with support from diverse technical experts in land sector carbon dynamics, climate-informed conservation, restoration and management of NWL, private landowner engagement, and policy and finance. The Labs are designed to be an intensive workshop where each state team (see below) will progress through a series of exercises and consultations, present concepts your team develops for panel review and critique, and engage in shared learning dialogues with other state teams.

The Learning Lab team from each state would ideally include 5-7 team members representing:

- **Governor's Office**
- **Relevant natural resource management agencies**
- **Potential partners from academia, NGOs, landowner organizations, and the private sector**

The end goal for the Labs is for each state to emerge with a matrix that matches current and potential policy and finance mechanisms to each of the NWL practices that offer the strongest potential contributions to your state's climate goals. Additional technical assistance for each state will be available from NGO partners after the conclusion of the Labs to refine this matrix and develop more detailed policy and finance concepts.

15. Is it feasible for your state/territory to include a diversity of staff, from the Governor's office to natural resources and climate change experts within state agencies, for its Learning Lab team? [see ideal team structure above]

☐ Yes

☐ No

16. Do you envision wanting to include non-State government people in your Learning Lab team?

☐ Yes

☐ No

If yes, indicate potential examples (e.g. academia, landowners, NGO, native/tribal, other) and/or specific entities:

17. What format works best for your primary point person to attend?

- ☐ 1-day in-person ☐ Flexible – any of the above
- ☐ 2-day in-person ☐ None
- ☐ Webinar

18. What format works best for your additional team members to attend?

- ☐ 1-day in-person
- ☐ 2-day in-person
- ☐ Webinar
- ☐ Flexible – any of the above

19. Do you anticipate needing financial assistance for travel and/or lodging to attend a Learning Lab in person?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

If yes, please describe.

20. Are you able to commit to participation if the Lab is held in the week of June 18 or 25?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

21. If not, would a July date increase your ability to participate?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

22. Would you like technical assistance from NGO partners to prepare for the Learning Lab outside of the Opportunity Assessment activity? If so, please describe here.

23. The Learning Lab has 5 proposed modules:

1. Where is the opportunity?: *Using the Opportunity Assessment, review the scale of your state's "offense and defense" opportunities, customize NWL strategies for your state's unique context, and assess sufficiency of NWL data for quantifying change*

2. How do we capture the opportunity?: *Identify who controls the highest impact lands for your states' unique NWL opportunities, and assess barriers and opportunities for landowners and public land managers to take needed actions*

3. Policy options and design: *Assess your NWL opportunities relative to existing and potential policy levers, and develop a matrix of policies aligned to maximize your opportunities*

4. Policy implementation: *Develop strategies for landowner engagement and technical assistance, and efficient quantification of NWL response to policies*

5. Finding leverage: *Identify potential federal funding, private impact finance, voluntary carbon, and other potential sources of finance*

Does the proposed structure of learning modules address your most important questions and need for additional technical assistance to refine and implement NWL strategies?